585 pointing with their fingers to the hoes they carry on their heads, they murmur the following words : " Here is our ox! It does not know how to drink! It does not know how to drink! (Homu a yi nwi! a yi nwi!)" The others rush towards them, and try to steal their burdens and to bar the way ; all this goes on amidst laughter, and until one of the old people of the bride's village says : " Let us leave them! (A hi ba tjikene!)" Then the company enters, laden with the precious hoes.

c) The counting of the lobolo.

585 4/12 The implements are deposited in the centre of the square and fixed into the ground by tens. The hoes used by the Thongas, whether of Native or European make, are lengthened and pointed in such a way that they can be introduced into a wooden handle, something like the tools of the lake dwellers. They have a very remote resemblance to an ace of spades with a pointed shaft.

585 The bride's family gathers to ascertain if the number agreed upon is there. They remark to one another that there are so and so many of them. " Look, they say, they have paid such and such a lobolo. (Labisan ba lobolile ha kukari.) " It is very important that there should be a large number of witnesses, for who knows to how many discussions and quarrels these hoes will give rise if the marriage turns out badly ? When this counting is done, all hearts being gladdened by the sight of the wealth which will eventually allow the bride's brother to get married himself, the jugs of beer, which were brought the day before by the aunts, sisters, and relations of the bride, are fetched in. They pass from one hand to another ; the old people, and the men, prefer going into a hut, where they talk over the latest news whilst they quench their thirst.

d) The wedding procession.

Whilst the old people rest, a goat is taken for the sacrifice and slaughtered at the door of the hut of the bride's mother. Whilst the goat is being cut into pieces, the bridegroom's sisters, the big

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

lobola money. But they learn to spend money on other things, and those who are converts to Christianity become regular purchasers of clothing, of better food, of books. The high taxation to which they are subjected also forces them to work. As long as this does not exceed a reasonable limit, and as long as the State causes the Native community to benefit by the high taxes levied on it, it is justifiable although this way of enforcing labour is not so normally healthy as the creation of new wants (1). Another powerful influence which tends to make men work more and to relieve women from the toil of tilling the fields, is this. Wishing to make money by selling grain, the Natives are beginning to clear larger fields than before, and we note with pleasure that they have adopted the use of the plough instead of the hoe in a great many quarters. The consequence of this change is that the men now do

(1) Another means has been used to obtain the same result, i. e. compulsory labour (in Thonga *shibalu*). It is not at all my intention to treat this important but delicate subject here. The League of Nations created in 1924 a special Slavery Commission which has very ably and fully discussed the whole subject. These discussions have resulted in a Convention which was adopted by the Assembly of 1926; art. 5, which deals with forced labour, runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that:

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

The League of Nations has thus established the general principles, and nearly thirty States have already signed the Convention; amongst these we note with pleasure Great Britain and Portugal. Now the question has been transferred to the International Labour Office, which must deal with the application of the Convention. A special Committee of experts has been elected and it is hoped that it will fix general principles for Coloured Labour, which shall be submitted to the General Labour Conference in a not distant future.

I am glad to add that the Portuguese Government has recently issued a decree (No 12,533) which has been published in the *Bolletim official de Moçambique*, November 1926, and which contains the following article (Art. 5. § unico): *Compulsory labour is only permitted when absolutely indispensable, for works of public interest and of undeniable urgency. This labour will be remunerated according to circumstances.*

C. AGRICULTURAL CUSTOMS.

I. *The Agricultural Year.*

137 221 At the season which is called *shimumu*, the little heat, that is to say in July, when the warm weather begins, the nkuhlu puts forth new shoots. Though rain is still far off, the mahogany and sala trees become covered with leaves of a wonderfully delicate green. A kind of Composita (the Helychrisum parviflorum, shirimbyati), which is wide-spread on the sandy dunes, blossoms all over the country ; a beautiful lily (Crinum Forbesii) will expand its splendid white and pink flowers : the *winter* (bushika) has passed away : soon the *hlobo* (summer) will come.

412 221 462 When the Ronga woman notices these signs, she picks up her hoe (shikomo) and starts for the hills, or for the marshes. Her husband has already repaired the implement for her, at home. If the handle was worn out, he has cut a branch of nkonono, (Terminalia sericea), which is the wood invariably used for the purpose, and has shaped it so that one end is thicker than the other ; in this thick end a hole is bored, while the iron hoe head is heated in the fire : the head has, at its base, a long iron point which is inserted nearly red-hot into the hole, burning its way in, and thus solidly fixing the two parts together. This method of fixing on the handle is called ku lumela shikomo. The Ronga hoe has a very short handle, sometimes not more than two feet in length. The Transvaal Thongas use handles three to four feet long. The woman has now nothing to do but to work hard, her lord and master having duly accomplished his share of the labour.

241 221 It is the end of August. Two or three months must still elapse before the rainy season sets in. This period of the year is devoted to a two-fold work : the clearing of fresh land and the cultivation of marshes.

The *clearing of fresh land*, ku tlhaba lisindje (Ro.), ku khatsha

532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.

313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Speionken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and
[197] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]